

HONORING FIREFIGHTER MARK
OHLER, SR.

HON. JOHN JOYCE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Firefighter Mark Ohler, Sr. for his 21 years of service with the Meyersdale Volunteer Fire Department in Somerset County, Pennsylvania.

Firefighters' commitment and service to our community are invaluable. Volunteer firefighters often are called on to respond to emergencies of all types. From battling structure fires to conducting search and rescue operations, volunteer firefighters respond immediately whenever disaster strikes. These heroes often go above and beyond—they teach first aid, educate students about fire and other dangerous hazards, and even install car safety seats for children. Through their diverse and often-difficult work, volunteer firefighters provide lifesaving services and are a staple of our local community.

Firefighter Ohler has worked throughout his career to serve the people of Somerset County. On behalf of Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, I thank him for his work to protect life and property in our community and wish him continued health, safety, and success.

**SUPPORTING EARLY-CAREER
RESEARCHERS ACT**

SPEECH OF

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 17, 2021

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the COVID-19 pandemic has created enormous disruptions to the scientific enterprise. The Committee on Science, Space, and Technology held two hearings to explore the challenges and learn what is needed to help the scientific community recover. Researchers and their students were kept away from the lab, significantly slowing progress on the research and limiting opportunities for mentoring. Research facilities were shuttered and conferences cancelled. Travel restrictions resulted in missed field campaigns and kept international students from joining their research groups on campus. These setbacks affected researchers and students across all scientific disciplines. Women and historically underrepresented groups were particularly affected. While the full cost of the pandemic in terms of lost research is not yet known, the Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) estimates that NIH alone lost \$16 billion of research and the Director of the National Science Foundation (NSF) put the figure at \$3 billion for NSF-funded research.

I am deeply concerned that these disruptions will have long-lasting consequences for the research ecosystem. One of the most urgent challenges we face is the potentially irreversible loss of research talent. The financial pressures of the pandemic forced many universities to institute hiring freezes for faculty positions. The STEM faculty job market con-

tracted as much as 70 percent in 2020. Early career researchers are the most vulnerable to this contraction, even if it is not permanent. Too many are currently in limbo. After years of hard work and an enormous investment of resources to train these scholars, we simply cannot afford to let them slip through the cracks. If we are to keep ahead of our global competitors and ensure our security and prosperity, we must act now to mitigate a loss of human capital that would take decades to recoup.

The Supporting Early-Career Researchers Act provides a bridge to help recent Ph.D. graduates stay on their chosen career path as they weather this turbulent period. The legislation establishes a two-year, \$250 million agency-wide early career fellowship pilot program at NSF. This will enable two cohorts of 1,600 fellows working in all STEM disciplines to carry out their research at the U.S. institutions of their choosing.

More than 30 organizations have endorsed H.R. 144. I want to thank Ranking Member LUCAS for joining me in introducing this bill and bringing it to the House Floor. I look forward to working with my colleagues in both bodies to see it enacted and funded quickly.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GLENN THOMPSON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, due to a death in the family, I was unable to cast my vote on May 14, 2021.

Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 143.

**PUPPIES ASSISTING WOUNDED
SERVICEMEMBERS FOR VET-
ERANS THERAPY ACT**

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 12, 2021

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1448, the "PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act," which is bipartisan legislation that directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program on dog training therapy, and to amend title 38 of the United States Code to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide service dogs to veterans with mental illnesses who do not have mobility impairments.

This legislation will reduce veteran suicide connected to mental health conditions by partnering veterans experiencing symptoms of PTSD and other post-deployment issues with service dogs through a Department of Veterans Affairs pilot program.

Dog therapy programs have a track record of reducing symptoms associated with PTSD, and through this pilot program, veterans are expected to experience an improved quality of life and ability to reenter society as well as increased chances of survival.

Many veterans have had their lives changed—in some cases, saved—by service

dogs, and this bill would expand this treatment by launching a pilot program to make veterans with mental health issues such as depression eligible to receive service dogs.

According to a report from the Department of Veteran Affairs:

the number of veterans with mental health conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and substance use disorders increased from 27 percent in 2001 to more than 40 percent in 2014, and an average of 20 veterans per day died by suicide in 2014;

11 to 20 out of every 100 veterans (or between 11 and 20 percent) who served in operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom have PTSD in a given year;

12 out of every 100 Gulf War Veterans (or 12 percent) have PTSD in a given year; and

An average of 20 veterans a day die by suicide.

PTSD symptoms can include crippling anxiety, emotional control issues, fear of public spaces, drug abuse, and most tragically, suicide.

A recent study led by the Purdue University College of Veterinary Medicine, found that veterans with service dogs produce more cortisol, a biomarker used as a metric of the effects of chronic and acute stress, than military veterans without a service dog in the home.

Moreover, veterans with service dogs reported having lower levels of anxiety, anger, sleep disturbances, and less alcohol abuse compared to veterans without service dogs.

We must do everything possible to combat veteran suicide, including innovative treatments like service dog therapy that address post-deployment mental health conditions.

Our veterans deserve every tool in the toolbox when it comes to their mental health, which is why I'm proud that this legislation encourages dog training therapy for veterans.

Congress can, and must, give veterans the opportunity to utilize the treatments that work best for them.

**HONORING FIREFIGHTER CHARLIE
TEETS II**

HON. JOHN JOYCE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Firefighter Charlie Teets II for his 21 years of service with the Meyersdale Volunteer Fire Department in Somerset County, Pennsylvania.

Firefighters' commitment and service to our community are invaluable. Volunteer firefighters often are called on to respond to emergencies of all types. From battling structure fires to conducting search and rescue operations, volunteer firefighters respond immediately whenever disaster strikes. These heroes often go above and beyond—they teach first aid, educate students about fire and other dangerous hazards, and even install car safety seats for children. Through their diverse and often-difficult work, volunteer firefighters provide lifesaving services and are a staple of our local community.

Firefighter Teets has worked throughout his career to serve the people of Somerset County. On behalf of Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, I thank him for his work to protect life and property in our community and